

V.B.T.T.A.

THE VICTORIAN BLIND
TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION



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OFFICIAL HANDBOOK



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INTRODUCTION

Blind table tennis is a sport which has been developed around the idea that totally blind, partially blind, and sighted persons, should be able to participate freely in a competitive sport, playing with ~~or~~ against each other; also that this should be possible without any one of these three categories of persons having an advantage or a disadvantage, in relation to the other, due to visual handicap. Furthermore, that this should not be achieved by the undesirable method of imposing a compensatory handicap such as a blind-fold. The Victorian Blind Table Tennis Association considers that this situation has very nearly been achieved with blind table tennis.

As indicated by its name, the sport is in some ways similar to table tennis. The major differences are that:- The Table is larger and has two raised edges, the net is larger and cannot be seen through, the bat is like a miniature cricket bat, the ball is slightly larger and contains jingle bells, in the play the ball is made to roll, rather than bounce and remains on the playing surface passing under the net.

The V.B.T.T.A. takes this opportunity to invite all members of the community to play blind table tennis. Any one if they so desire is welcome to join the Association.

The V.B.T.T.A. believes that blind table tennis is a competitive sport which should be played to win, irrespective of handicap or ability.

Blind table tennis has developed into a skilled sport, and with keen competition standards will continue to improve. The sport is played in accordance with the laws of blind table tennis which follow.



THE LAWS OF BLIND TABLE TENNIS

Comprising regulations regarding equipment,
rules governing the play and its control,
and some additional recommendations.

Adopted by,
The Victorian Blind Table Tennis Association,
As of
7th April, 1975

1. EQUIPMENT

1A The Table

- 1A1 For doubles, the horizontal rectangular "playing surface" (the upper surface) shall be 85 cms. above the floor, 400 cms. long, 150 cms. wide and is preferably constructed of plywood or masonite. The 400 cm. edges are bordered by vertical "sides" reaching 6 cms. above the playing surface.
- 1A1.1 The playing surface shall be a dark flat colour (non gloss), and the lines shall be drawn in a flat white.
- 1A1.2 Lines are drawn parallel to, and 175 cms. from, each end thus forming three areas designated as:- the "serving end", the "receiving end", separated by the "dead area".
- 1A1.3 Lines are drawn parallel to, and 50 cms. from, each side. Lines are drawn parallel to, and 40 cms. from, each end. Thus a service rectangle is formed in each corner.
- 1A1.4 All lines shall be marked so that they can be located by blind players, but these markings must not obstruct the play.

- 1A2 For singles, the playing surface is as for doubles, except that the width is reduced to 110 cms. and lines are drawn from each end parallel to the sides down the centre of the table for a distance of 40 cms. thus forming service rectangles.
- 1A2.1 A doubles table may be adapted for singles, by the use of two inserts, each insert measuring 400 cms. x 20 cms. x 6 cms. each placed on the playing surf 110 cms. apart.
- 1A3 The playing surface of 11 tables should be in one section; but two sections are acceptable where the join is at an even level and passes across the table, directly under the net.
- 1B The Net
A net is placed across the centre of the table, half way between the two ends. It shall be constructed to allow 8 cm. clearance above the playing surface. The net, to be made with a solid material which cannot be seen through, shall measure no less than the table width, by 50 cms. high from its base to its top. A fringe shall be attached to the base of the net so that it hangs just clearing the playing surface; it shall be opaque and shall slightly retard the progress of the ball. The net supports should be sturdy, but should not obstruct the play.
- 1C The Ball
A standard badminton ball with jingle bells inserted into it, shall be used. Its structure is a 6-6.5 cm. diameter plastic sphere with holes. It shall contain jingle bells and weigh 25-30 gms. It shall be of a colour or colours which contrast with that of the playing surface. The ball shall yield a good clear sound.



10 The Bat

The bat is flat bladed on both sides, it is 37.5 cms. long, being made up of a 1 cm. plywood blade, 8 cms. by 25 cms. and a 12.5 cm long handle, 3 cms. wide by 2 cm. thick.

2. THE PLAY

The play is orientated around a contest between two players, i.e., "singles", or two pairs of players, i.e., "doubles". The object of the contest is to strike the ball in accordance with the rules, so that the opposition is unable to do likewise.

2A An uninterrupted sequence of strikes of the ball between the opponents until ended, is termed a "rally". The ball is considered to be in play for the duration of a rally.

2A1 The player who first strikes the ball in a rally, is termed the "server".

2A2 The player who should next strike the ball in a rally is termed the "receiver".

2A3 To commence a rally, the server shall first make a "good service". The receiver shall then make a "good return", and the rally shall be continued by good returns from alternate ends.

2A4 A rally, the result of which is not scored, is termed a "let".

2A5 A rally, the result of which is scored, is termed a "point".

2A6 At the commencement of a rally, the players shall stand directly behind their respective courts, and a player may not move along the side of the table during a rally before he or his partner has struck the ball.

2B A good service

2B1 The ball shall be placed on the table within the server's service rectangle and shall remain there until struck.

2B2 The server shall then ask the receiver if he is right, after the receiver replies that he is, the server says "play" immediately prior to making the serve.

2B3 To make the serve, the server shall strike the ball so that it passes under the net and across the receiver's service line and into the receiver's service rectangle.

2C A good return.

2C1 A receiver shall make a good return on receiving a good service.

2C2 A player shall make a good return on receiving a good return.

2C3 A good return shall be made by striking the ball so that it passes under the net and remains beyond the dead area, without going over the side.

2D Striking the Ball

2D1 The ball shall only be struck by the bat, and/or the hand holding the bat as far up as the wrist, contacting nothing else except playing equipment.

2D2 In making a serve, the ball shall be struck when it is stationary.

2D3 In making a return, the ball shall be struck while it is moving on the playing surface.

2D4 In striking the ball, there shall be only one contact made with the ball.

2D5 In striking the ball, only one hand shall be in contact with the bat and the free hand shall be clear of the playing surface.



2E In Play

2E1 The ball shall be in play from the moment that it is struck by the server in service.

2E2 The ball shall cease to be in play, at the moment the contravention of a rule is judged, by an umpire, line judge or scorer. The umpire will consequently declare the rally a let, a fault, or a point.

NOTE: - All such judgements shall be made after the ball has been put into play.

2F A Let

Play is interrupted by a let, and the point is played again, should one of the following occur:-

2F1 Should a serve be made when the receiver is not ready.

2F2 In the event of an accident, beyond the control of a player or official, which could influence the play. This includes noise, movement, etc., but not a constant hazard.

2F3 Should the playing equipment be damaged during play.

2F4 On realization that the pattern of play is not according to the correct order.

2F5 If a player's unnecessary actions could in the umpire's opinion, possibly distract an opponent.

2G A Point

Except as provided in Rule 2F, a player (and his partner) shall lose a point, i.e., the opposition shall gain a point, should he (and or his partner), contravene the rules herein, in one of the following ways:-

NOTE:- The suggested terminology, for each contravention, in brackets.

2G1 If a player does not follow the correct procedure prior to making the serve. (fault)

- 262 If a player does not stand as required at the commencement of a rally. (out of position)
- 263 If a player fails to make two consecutive good serves, (double fault). Within the same point a let is ignored therefore when occurring between two bad serves (or faults) it cannot be regarded as breaking the consecutiveness of the faults.
- 264 If a player fails to strike the ball correctly, (as is appropriate; double hit, both hands on the bat, off the body, moving ball, dead ball.)
- 265 If a player allows the bat or the hand holding the bat, to contact the net. (hit the net)
- 266 If a player fails to keep the free hand clear of the playing surface. (interference by free hand)

3. THE SCORE and the continuity of play

A score is derived by tallying the points won by each player or pair.

3A A Game

A game is won by a player or pair who is at least two points ahead on or after reaching a score of eleven points. During a game play should continue without delay.

3B A Match

A match shall consist of one, three or five games. The only break between games, shall be that necessary to change ends; except that a break of not more than five minutes, shall be allowed between the third and fourth game of a match, if requested by a player or official.

3B1 A match is won by a player or pair winning a majority of the games in that match.

3B2 A match shall otherwise be won and lost by default, in which case no score shall be given. Such a decision shall only be made by the umpire.

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... of the ... at the ...
... of the ... at the ...
... of the ... at the ...

- 3B2.1 Should a player by his absence, hold up play for more than five minutes, they shall lose the match by default. Except that the umpire at his discretion, may grant a few extra minutes grace; or when in the case of doubles the player's partner decides to continue alone, being able to do so by following the pattern of play as for singles.
- 3B2.2 Should a player withdraw or be withdrawn by the umpire in serious concern for the player's health, they shall lose the match by default. Except in doubles where the player's partner decides to continue alone, by following the pattern of play as in singles.
- 3B2.3 Should a player be disqualified by the umpire he (and his partner) shall lose the match by default.

4. THE PATTERN OF PLAY

- 4A Point by point in a game. (also see diagrams herein)
- 4A1 For consecutive points, the ball is served from alternate ends of the table. It is first served from the serving end, next from the receiving end, etc.
- 4A2 A serve is made from one rectangle to the diagonally opposite rectangles, i.e., right hand rectangle to right hand rectangle, or left hand rectangle to left hand rectangle. Such a serve from the serving end, is followed by a similar one from the receiving end.
- 4A3 Every alternate serve is made from the alternate hand side rectangle. The first serve shall be from the right hand rectangle at the serving end.
- 4A4 In doubles:-
- 4A4.1 Before the commencement of a game, the players must decide at which rectangle they will first play from. The pair at the serving end deciding first.
- 4A4.2 At intervals of four points, the players at each end shall change sides alternatively. The pair at the serving end changing first.

4B Game by Game in a Match

4B1 For the first game of a match, the players shall go to their respective ends, decided by the toss of a coin. Provided that the first named player on the schedule, tosses the coin so that it lands on the playing surface; and the last named player on the schedule, calls "heads" or "tails" as the coin is spinning in the air. The side of the coin facing upwards shall win and the player allotted that side shall nominate the end at which he (and his partner) will play, or shall call on his opponent to do so.

4B2 At the end of a game, the players shall change ends for the next game, if any.

4C Out of Order of the Pattern of Play.

During a match, if the pattern of play is found to be out of its correct order, the play shall be interrupted immediately. If during a rally, a let shall be called. All scores up to the discovery of the error, shall be reckoned. Changes of the players' positions shall be made if necessary. The match shall then continue according to the correct pattern of play.

5. THE CONTROL OF PLAY5A Referee

5A1 Play shall be controlled by referee.

5A2 The Referee shall be appointed by the V.B.T.T.A. he or a deputy (appointed to exercise authority during his absence) must be present at all times during the play.

5A3 The Referee shall be responsible for:- the interpretation and application of the rules; the conduct of the draw; the scheduling of matches; the allocation of umpires,

line judges and scorers; and the resolution of all matters of appeal arising from an umpires interpretation and application of the rules.

NOTE:- The conduct of the draw and scheduling of matches need not necessarily be performed by the Referee but he is responsible for their conduct.

- 5A4 The Referee's decision on the interpretation and application of rules shall be final. However, after an event (tournament, competition, etc.), appeal may be made to the Rules Committee of the V.B.T.T.A. regarding a ruling of a referee on a matter other than one of fact. Such a case shall be made in writing, and if upheld shall serve as guidance for future decisions, but shall not affect the finality of the ruling in question.
- 5A5 The Referee's ruling on additional rules for an event, not covered herein, may be appealed against, to the management body of that event.
- 5A6 In addition to that already provided for, the Referee shall have the following discretionary powers:-
- 5A6.1 Where the Referee is satisfied that it is desirable to do so, he may replace an umpire, line judge or scorer, and the decisions on fact made by that official may be reversed by the Referee.
- 5A6.2 The Referee shall be sole judge of unfair play. Should a player so offend three times in a match he shall be disqualified, provided always that the referee has the power of immediate disqualification.
- 5A6.3 Should a player continue to disregard the reasonable requests of an umpire, pertaining to the play; the Referee shall at his discretion, rule that if this should continue, the player shall be disqualified.
- 5A6.4 The Referee shall also have the power to enable him to overcome any unforeseen situation, which is not embraced by these rules.

5B Umpires 11.

5B1 An umpire shall be one of a number of persons appointed by the V.B.T.T.A. to umpire its matches. One umpire shall officiate at each match.

5B2 Two line judges and a scorer should be appointed to assist an umpire, in matters delegated to them by the umpire and/or the referee. The participants shall be informed as to the line judges' sphere of responsibility, prior to the commencement of the match.

5B3 Should circumstances arise under which the result of a match might be decided by default, the umpire shall, if necessary, direct the referee's attention to the circumstances.

5B4 To conduct the match the umpire shall carry out and perform the following duties and functions:-

5B4.1 Announce the match, introduce himself, and call the players to the table for the toss.

5B4.2 Announcing the result of the toss, he will direct the players to their respective ends; and whilst informing the line judges of their sphere of responsibility, he shall allow the players to have a hit-up.

5B4.3 Announce the identity of the line judges and scorer and their spheres of responsibility. Then ask the players to stand ready for play.

5B4.4 Ask the other officials and the players if they are ready for play. Then name the players in clockwise direction around the table starting with the player at the right-hand side of the serving end.

5B4.5 Start the play by saying eg. "First game, love all, this is play".

5B4.6 Call the serve for each point.

5B4.7 When the ball travels slowly across the dead area, the umpire or line judge as previously arranged, should comment on its position relative to the dead area so that a player will know whether or not he is required to strike the ball.

- 5B4.8 As each point is won, state briefly why it was lost, then give the new points score of the game; always calling the serving end score first. Then continue with the next point.
- 5B4.9 In doubles, instruct the players to change sides as required.
- 5B4.10 As a game is won, call "game", then name the winning player or pair, give the winning score then the losing score and then the game match score. Next direct the players to change ends, if necessary.
- 5B4.11 The umpire shall endeavour to cause play to run smoothly and without delay, his calls and instructions being clear and concise.
- 5B4.12 Rules 5B4.4 through to 5B4.11 inclusive are applicable to all games in a match.
- 5B5 The umpire shall be the sole judge of unfair play. Should a player so offend three times in a match he shall be disqualified, provided always that the umpire has the power of immediate disqualification.

5C The Finality of Officials' Decisions.

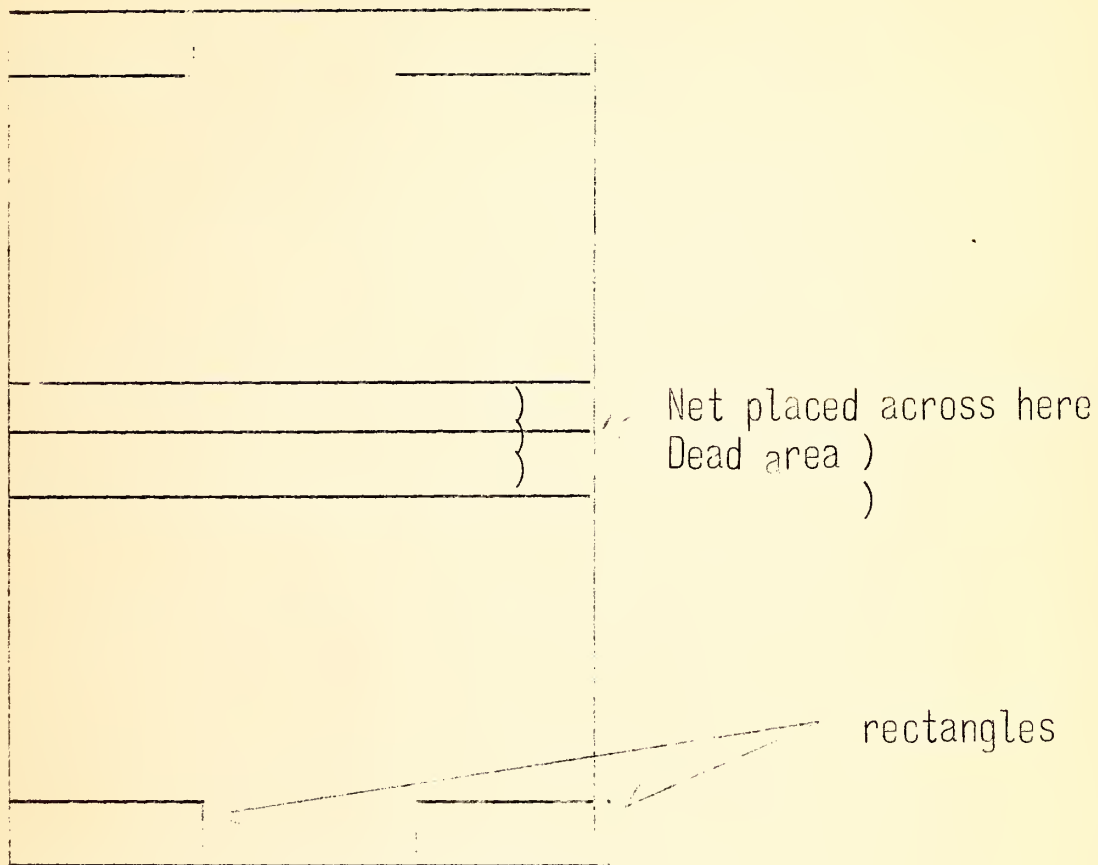
- 5C1 In a match an umpire's decision on fact shall be final, except that the final decision in the province of a line judge or scorer, shall be made by that official.
- 5C2 The ruling of an umpire, line judge or scorer on fact, may be questioned but not disputed.
- 5C3 The ruling of an umpire on rule or interpretation of rule may be disputed in an orderly manner. Such disputes must be resolved before the match can continue. A dispute may be resolved by prompt agreement or by referral to the referee.
- 5C4 The ruling of the referee or a deputy in authority on rule or interpretation of rule may be questioned but not disputed.

- 505 The ruling of a referee on rules specific to an event and NOT covered herein, may be disputed in an orderly manner. Such disputes may be resolved by prompt agreement or by referral to an authorized representative of the management body of that event, whose decision shall be final.
- 50 During the course of a match the only recognized mode of communication among the players and officials concerned shall be speech.



6. DIAGRAMS

6A A Playing Surface



NOTE:- The "serving end" and "receiving end" are fixed references, but they may be at either end.

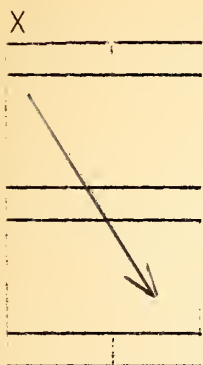
The Service Pattern For Singles

(Diagram)

Arrow passes from
server's rectangle

(umpire's directives)

Calling the service

1st point

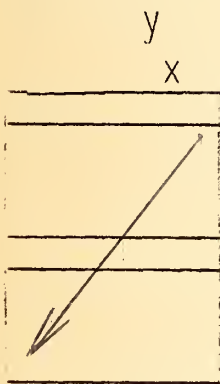
x is serving end

x to y, right

2nd point

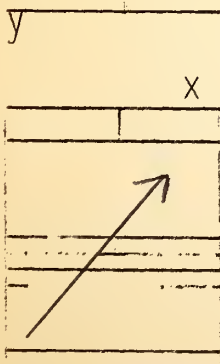
x is serving end

y to x, right

3rd point

x is serving end

x to y, left

4th point

x is serving end

y to x, left

For the succeeding points, the pattern above, shall
be repeated, throughout the game.

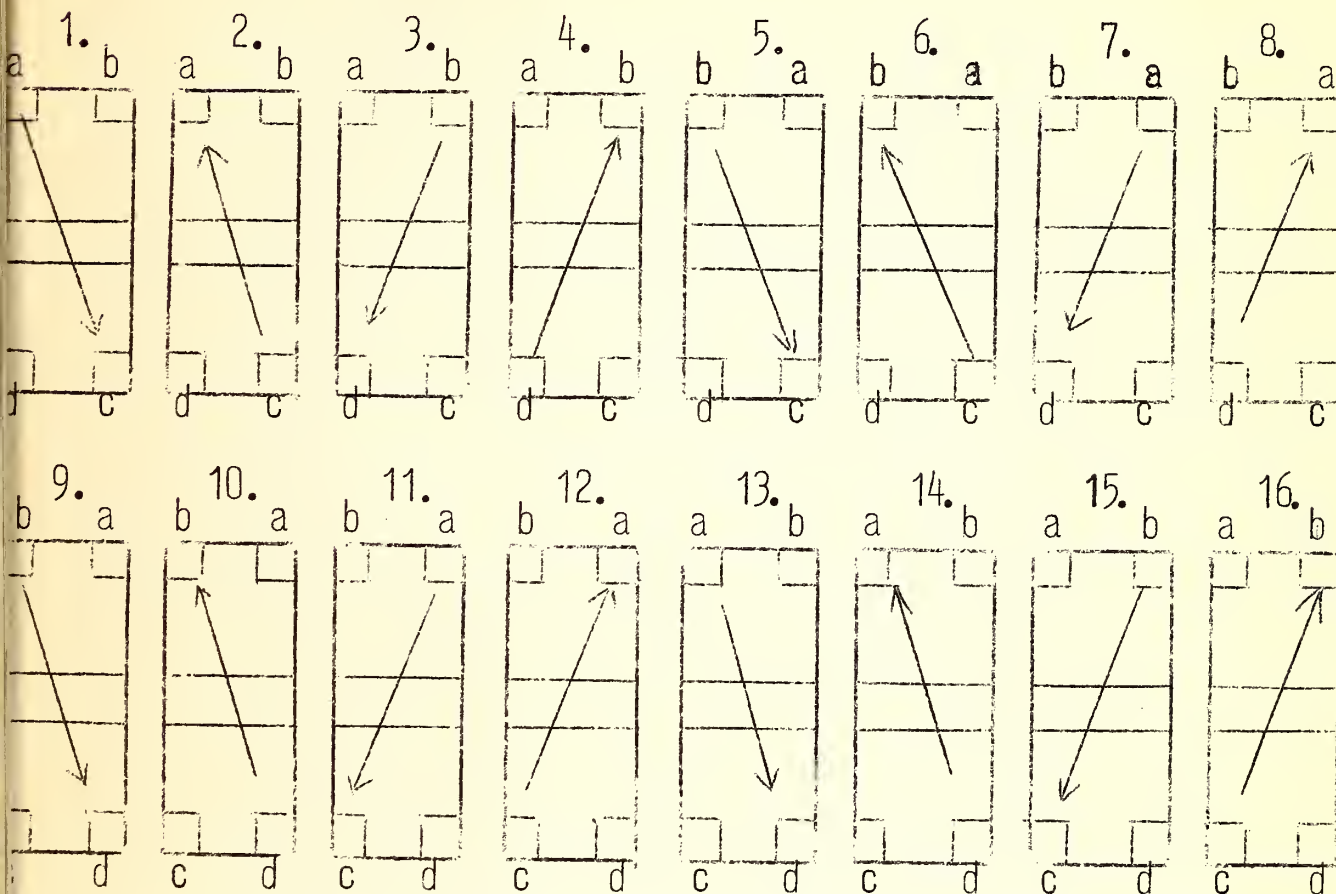
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6C

The Service Pattern for Doubles (Diagram)

In relation to the table, the pattern for doubles is the same as for singles, but the pattern in relation to the players is affected by the players changing courts.

For the diagrams below, the upper end shall be the serving end and the players are:- 'a', 'b', 'c' and 'd'.



The umpire's directions and calling the service.

(As a description of the diagrams).

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. a to c | 5. b to c | 9. b to d | 13. a to d |
| 2. c to a | 6. c to b | 10. d to b | 14. d to a |
| 3. b to d | 7. a to d | 11. a to c | 15. b to c |
| 4. d to b | 8. d to a | 12. c to a | 16. c to b. |
| serving | receiving | serving | receiving |
| end (a & b) | end (c & d) | end (a & b) | end (c & d) |
| change | change | change | change |

Note:- From this point, the pattern is repeated throughout the game.

7 GENERAL

- 7A The rules herein shall apply to both doubles and singles play, except where either one is specified.
- 7B Any reference to "he", shall imply he or she.
- 7C Recommendations
- 7C1 The playing space should be no less than 7 meters by 5 meters.
- 7C2 Surrounds should delimit the playing space, from other such spaces and space provided for spectators. They should be 1 meter high, except where they separate two tables, in which case they should be 2 meters high. They should be constructed so as not to interfere with the players' movements.
- NOTE:- It is not advisable to play more than one match at a time in the same room.
- 7C3 The light source should be no less than 3 meters from the floor. Measuring at table height, the light should be at least 400 lux in strength, uniformly over the table.

The above rules of blind table tennis should not be interpreted so rigidly as to prohibit participation in the sport by individuals with physical disabilities (whether temporary or permanent) that prevent such individuals complying with any particular rules. All such cases should be brought to the attention of the referee, who may rule that certain allowances and provisions, as he deems appropriate and reasonable, shall be made for the player concerned.

8. FURTHER AMMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONS.

AMMENDMENTS TO RULES.

- (1) So that the "Free hand", may be allowed on the Playing Surface the the following Ammendments must be made.

Rule 2.D.5.

Omitt the words, " and the free hand shall be clear of the playing surface.

Rule 2.G.6.

Omitt. The entire clause.

- (2) So that a fault be called when a ball strikes the net in service.

Rule 2.B.3.

Insert the words. "without touching" between the words "under" and "the".

ERRORS AND OMMISSIONS.

- (1) A Rule numbered 2.H. should be included. as follows.

2.H. A Fault.

A fault occurs when a player fails to make a good serve as defined in rule 2.B.

2.H.1. When a Linesman calls, "Fault", the ball should be returned to the server. The umpire should call the score, call the service, adding, "Second Service".

2.H.2. Should a second fault be served the linesman should call, "Fault". The umpire shall call, "Double Fault", and award the point to the Receiver.

- (2) In Rule 1.B. The Net. The height of the net should read 75 cm.

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